

originally filed in a manner more consistent with the guidelines and requirements of the USPTO.

-- Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiment

The present invention relates to an improved golf ball holder system. In general, the present invention sets forth a novel and non-obvious structure for displaying indicia at golf practice areas. More particularly, the present invention provides improved means for a golfer to store a number of golf balls in manner that allows them to readily access a single golf ball and position it in the desired hitting position as the golfer practices hitting golf balls while also prominently displaying some form of selected indicia.

One envisioned environment for the present invention to be used is at a driving range for practicing golf or on the practice area adjacent most golf courses. Both of these locations are very fertile opportunities for numerous types or forms of indicia, such as advertising, instructional, or other information whether golf-related or not.

As shown in Figure 1, one embodiment of the present invention is a low-lying base unit 10 that incorporates at least two distinct sections, identified generally herein as elements 12 and 14. In general, the base unit 10 of the present invention is made of molded plastic and has an overall design wherein it tapers forward by having a back that is higher than the front.

A first section 12 is designed to hold, and secure for easy access, a number of golf balls (not shown). More specifically, as shown, section 12 has a tapered wall design that fully secures a large number of golf balls while allowing ready access to a single golf ball. This allows the golfer using the present invention while practicing to easily orient a single golf ball in the appropriate position for hitting the next shot. While the specific size of the golf ball holding section 12 is a matter of design choice, it is envisioned that the preferred embodiment of the present invention is designed to hold about 100 regulation size golf balls.

A second section, 14 is a plaque-type area located adjacent the golf ball holding section 12 and designed to effectively display any selected form of indicia to the golfer using a practice facility incorporating the present invention. In one embodiment of the present invention, the indicia display section 14 is angled so as to project the indicia to be displayed upward toward the line-of-sight of the golfer. As a result, the present invention provides an improved technique for conveying selected information to a desired person of interest. In accordance with the present invention, the specific types of information selected as indicia is a matter of design choice and may be directed at any number of subject matters or presentation forms without escaping the intended scope of the present invention. A few acceptable types of indicia that may be used with some preferred embodiments of the present invention include but are not limited to advertising materials, instructional materials, or other information desired for a practicing golfer to see.

In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, the indicia take the form of essentially flat display unit 16 with the selected information to be displayed printed thereon. Such display unit 16 may be any well-known material commonly used for signage such as relatively hard paper, cardboard, light metal, etc.

The present invention allows for easy removal and insertion of the selected display unit 16 from the display section 14. Two of the particular design types that may be used in accordance with the present invention to attach the selected indicia display unit 16 to the base unit 10 are set forth in the offset Figures 1a and 1b. One acceptable technique to securely position the selected display unit 16 relative to the display section 14 includes a groove design wherein the display section 14 incorporates groove 18 for receiving a portion of the edge of display unit, or signage, 16. An edge portion of display unit 16 is positioned within the groove 18 to prohibit undesired movement of the display unit, or signage, 16 relative to the display section 14. Secondly, in lieu of a groove, the display section 14 may utilize a plateau 20 around a portion of its periphery to securely position the display unit , or signage 16.